



Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown
Eastern District of California

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BISHOP WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO EMBEZZLING \$760,000 FROM WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that JO ANN BARBA, 42, of Bishop, Calif. pleaded guilty today to bank embezzlement before United States District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Mark J. McKeon, who is prosecuting the case, BARBA was a Personal Financial Representative at Washington Mutual Bank in Bishop, California. Between December 2005 and April 2007, she embezzled approximately \$760,000 from the bank accounts of elderly customers. She "repaid" some of these accounts with money she embezzled from other accounts. Washington Mutual Bank repaid the accounts, and ultimately will suffer a loss of approximately \$600,000.

The defendant is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge O'Neill on May 8, 2009, at 10:30 a.m. The maximum statutory penalty for bank embezzlement is 30 years in prison and a \$1 million fine. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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